CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-2915
Atlantic Refining Company Service Station
585 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Baltimore County
ca. 1930
Private

The Atlantic Refining Company Service Station at 585 Frederick Road was constructed circa 1930. Located on the main artery bisecting Catonsville, the Art Deco style service station holds a prominent place at the intersection of Frederick Road and Bishop's Lane. As the automobile gained dominance as the preferred choice of personal transportation, service stations, providing gasoline sales as well as lubrication services, arose on major thoroughfares like Frederick Road throughout the country. By the second quarter of the 20th century, the automobile had made a considerable impression upon Catonsville, with automobile dealerships, repair shops and service stations being erected throughout the town. Despite the decline of the transportation-related buildings along major commercial corridors in the latter part of the century, the service station has continued to administer assistance to car owners in spite of several changes in ownership.

The building is one story high and comprised of two main blocks – a three-bay wide office/shop and a single-bay garage for lubrication to the west. Commonly referred to as the Art Deco Gas Station, the modest building is stylistically embellished on the façade facing Frederick Road. This restricted detailing provides ornamentation to the projecting central entry, flanking window openings, and terra cotta entablature. In contrast, the side and rear elevations of the building are unadorned and read as a commercial service station. The building rests upon a poured concrete foundation, features parged brick construction, and has a flat roof. A three-bay wide concrete block addition on the rear of the building, with a poured concrete foundation and flat roof, dates from the middle part of the 20th century.

## Inventory No. BA-2915

## Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

1. Name of I	Property						
historic	Atlantic Refining Company Service Station						
other	Busick's Atlantic Service; Ridgeway Automotive, Inc.; Art Deco Gas Station						
2. Location							
street and number	585 Frederick F	Road			_	_ not for publication	
city, town	Baltimore	_ vicinity					
county	Baltimore						
3. Owner of	Property	(give names and mailing	g address	ses of all owners	)		
name	Jeanne M. and	Robert J. Holden		*			
street and number	585 Frederick F	Road			telephone	410-744-4664	
city, town	Baltimore	·	state	Maryland	zip code	21228-4624	
city, town	y of deeds, etc. Towson,	Baltimore County Courthous	е	tax m	ap and parcel	m: 101, p: 1350 1 folio 57	
City, town	TOWSOII,			libei	1232	1 1010 37	
5. Primary L	ocation o	f Additional Data	a				
Contri Deterr Deterr Recor	buting Resource mined Eligible for mined Ineligible fo ded by HABS/HA	in National Register District in Local Historic District the National Register/Maryla or the National Register/Mary ER ort or Research Report at MH	land Reg				
6. Classifica	tion					-	
Category districtX_building(s)structuresiteobject	Ownership publicprivateboth	Current Function agriculture _X_commerce/tradedefensedomesticeducationfunerarygovernmenthealth careindustry	resctrawcur	cant/not in use		Moncontributing  buildings  - sites  - structure  - objects  - Total  f Contributing Resources  y listed in the Inventory	

7. Description		Inventory No. BA-2915		
Condition				
excellent	deteriorated			

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Atlantic Refining Company constructed the Art Deco service station at 585 Frederick Road in Catonsville, in 1930. The building is one story high and comprised of two main blocks – a three-bay wide office/shop and a single-bay garage for lubrication to the west. This service station is located in the town of Catonsville at the southeast corner of Frederick Road and Bishop's Lane, with paved parking surrounding the building. Commonly referred to as the Art Deco Gas Station, the modest building is stylistically embellished on the façade facing Frederick Road. This restricted detailing provides ornamentation to the projecting central entry, flanking window openings, and terra cotta entablature. In contrast, the side and rear elevations of the building are unadorned and read as a commercial service station. The building rests upon a poured concrete foundation, features parged brick construction, and has a flat roof. A three-bay wide concrete block addition on the rear of the building, with a poured concrete foundation and flat roof, dates from the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **EXTERIOR**

X good

fair

ruins

altered

The façade of the three-bay wide main block serving as the office/shop faces Frederick Road. A slightly projecting center bay marks this primary elevation with a curvilinear parapet at the roofline. The main entry is located within a flat arched opening with concave imposts. This opening now holds a replacement single-leaf wood door with a fixed light. Flanking the door are two fixed plate glass windows. The projecting mullions of the plate glass windows and the entry create one-light transoms above. Directly above the opening, the lettering, "RIDGEWAY AUTOMOTIVE, INC. 744-4664" have been applied to the plane of the wall.

On either side of the center bay are narrow symmetrically placed 1/1 wood windows. They are located in recessed rectangular panels with round trefoil lintels and recessed rectangular panels below the projecting sills. A similar window marks the west elevation of the office/shop block. The terra cotta entablature is the most distinctive feature on the building. The entablature is composed of a narrow ogee molded architrave, plain frieze, and wider ogee molded cornice. Art Deco styled brackets with chevrons and floral detailing symmetrically mark the entablature. Scrolls and acanthus leaves adorn the highest point of the round trefoil parapet.

To the west of the office is the single-bay garage, which is slightly taller and set back about three feet from the plane of the main block. This parged bay features a wood pull-up, replacement door with panels and two bands of lights. The lettering, "LUBRICATION SERVICE" is directly above the door. The flat roof is edged by a similar terra cotta entablature with a narrow ogee molded architrave, plain frieze, and wider ogee molded cornice. This entablature returns slightly on the west elevation of the garage.

Two large industrial-like metal windows with pivoting lights pierce the west elevation of the garage. Symmetrically placed, these 40-light windows are divided by wide mullions, feature parged projecting sills,

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and wire-reinforced glass. The south elevation of the garage is similarly fenestrated by a single industrial-like window with pivoting lights and wire-reinforced glass.

A concrete block addition with a stepped parapet and flat roof protrudes from the south elevation of the main office/shop block. This three-bay wide addition has three equally spaced garage openings that provide access for automobiles to the lubricating service bays on the interior. The addition projects beyond the wall plane of the original garage bay. An industrial-like window with twenty-four lights marks this exposed elevation, facing west. The garage bays of this addition, facing south, have pull-up garage doors. Each of these wood doors has recessed square panels and two bands of six lights.

The east elevation is composed of the two-bay wide rear addition and the one-bay wide east side of the main block. The addition is clad with stucco, and marked by two large pivot windows. These twenty-four light metal windows are symmetrically placed on either side of a projecting masonry buttress. A single-leaf wood replacement door was added to the southernmost bay of the elevation. The top of the wall features a stepped parapet with concrete coping. A wide plate glass window with a wood mullion and sill pierces the north elevation of the addition. The east side of the main office/shop block has no window or door openings. The terra cotta entablature returns to ornament about four feet elevation, which is further adorned by an ornamental terra cotta plaque with foliage.

#### INTERIOR

The interior of the service station is composed of three main spaces: the customer service room in the front, a storage room directly behind, and garage in the rear addition and original side bay. The customer service room has a poured concrete floor and a square-edge wood baseboard. The stretcher-bond brick walls have been clad with plywood paneling, and the ceiling has been covered with acoustic tile. Square-edged casings frame the window and door openings. The entry connecting this space to the back storage room has been removed; however, a single-leaf wood door with four panels provides access to a small restroom on the west side. The storage room features a poured concrete floor, stretcher-bond brick walls, and a stuccoed plaster ceiling. Abundant shelving is used to accommodate automobile parts storage. The rear garage addition and original side bay has been internally connect to create the largest space in the building. It is marked by a poured concrete floor and painted concrete block walls. A steel summer beam is exposed at the ceiling, which is completely covered with rolled plastic. This room also contains car lifts, fluorescent lights, shelving, metal cabinets, tools, and equipment. Metal tubing for electric wires runs along the top of the walls, near the ceiling.

ance		Inventory No. BA-2915			
Areas of Significance	Check and j	ustify below			
agriculture archeology X architecture art X commerce communications community planning conservation	cconomics education engineering entertainment/ recreation ethnic heritage exploration/ settlement	health/med industry invention landscape a law literature maritime his military	philosophy politics/government architecture religion science social history		
Significance dates c. 1930 - 1950		Architect	Unknown		
circa 1930		Builder	Unknown		
_ National Register		faryland Register	not evaluated		
	Areas of Significance  agriculture archeology X_ architecture art X_ commerce communications community planning conservation  attes  c. 1930 - 1950  circa 1930	Areas of Significance  _ agriculture _ archeology X architecture _ art _ commerce _ communications _ community planning _ conservation  tes  _ c. 1930 - 1950  _ circa 1930  Check and jute _ economics _ education _ engineering _ entertainment/ recreation _ ethnic heritage _ exploration/ settlement	Architect  Areas of Significance  — agriculture — archeology — archeology — education — industry — engineering — invention — art — entertainment/ — communications — communications — community planning — conservation		

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The Atlantic Refining Company Service Station at 585 Frederick Road was constructed circa 1930. Located on the main artery bisecting Catonsville, the Art Deco style service station holds a prominent place at the intersection of Frederick Road and Bishop's Lane. As the automobile gained dominance as the preferred choice of personal transportation, service stations, providing gasoline sales as well as lubrication services, arose on major thoroughfares like Frederick Road throughout the country. By the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the automobile had made a considerable impression upon Catonsville, with automobile dealerships, repair shops and service stations being erected throughout the town. Despite the decline of the transportation-related buildings along major commercial corridors in the latter part of the century, the service station has continued to administer assistance to car owners in spite of several changes in ownership.

### History Of Service Station And The Atlantic Refining Company Service Station

By the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the automobile was emerging as the vehicle of choice. It provided individuals with the opportunity to enjoy the personalized travel possible with the horse and buggy, without their associated expense and effort. Many Americans were no longer content to sit passively in a rail car and watch the scenery go by. For some, the automobile was a rejection of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the mass mentality of public transportation.<sup>1</sup> The automobile gave Americans the freedom to experience the thrill of the open road and to go as fast or as far as the motorist desired. In 1898, there were approximately 800 cars in the United States, a number that multiplied tenfold by 1900, reaching 8,000 automobiles.<sup>2</sup> Soon cars were manufactured in great numbers – flooding the marketplace. By 1929, total car registration reached 26,000,000 and gas was available at some 317,000 places.<sup>3</sup>

The exact location of the first gas "station" in the United State is controversial, although the date appears to coincide with the appearance of the gasoline pump in 1905. To attract motorists, the stations had to do more than just sell gasoline. They often provided washing and lubrication services, as well as public restrooms. Due to the demands of the motorist, more space was needed for repairs, tires, batteries, other automotive accessories,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Michael Karl Witzel, *The American Gas Station* (Osceola, WI: Motor Books International Publishers, 1992), p.7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> John Margolies, *Pump and Circumstance*, (Boston, MA: Bulfinch Press, 1993), p. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Planning Techniques for New and Remodeled Buildings: Service Stations 1," The Architectural Forum, 66 (February, 1937), p. 86.

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and additional sales and display areas.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the gas stations of today, the filling stations focused on providing automobile related services only and did not provide other products found in the associated convenience stores of the last three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The breakup of the Standard Oil Trust in 1911, combined with the discovery of new oil in many countries, created corporate rivalries between the oil companies of the period. "By 1920 there were approximately 15,000 service stations in the United States – an increase of approximately 1,200 stations per year." At this time, gas stations were primarily dealer-owned, but company-owned and –operated gas stations were increasing in number. Companies began to adopt logos, signs and slogans to attract consumers. The early gasoline stations were designed to promote the oil corporation that they represented. By World War I, drive-in filling stations were found throughout the country, especially in the larger cities. The drive-in station drastically altered urban land use, as the installation required enough space for motorists to pull on and off the street, as well as space to park next to the pump. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the highway was in its infancy. Consequently, predicting the ideal locations and sites for this new building type was difficult. As new roads opened, the oil companies competed to construct gas stations, even developing a series of prefabricated stations for easy assembly and construction across the country. Their colorful signs, pumps, and buildings changed the landscape of America.

As no preconceived standards had been established for gas station architecture, retailers began to experiment with designs for stations, constructing buildings that resembles airplanes, animals, boats, icebergs, pyramids, and pagodas. Though fanciful in nature, these buildings were the first to deal with the issue of architecture as related to the gas station.

On narrow lanes and on wide, important boulevards these structures, are to be found sometimes wedged in between pretentious buildings, but sometimes placed on important corners with plenty of elbow room. There will be found, ready for the most fastidious automobilists, Chinese pagodas, Mohammeden mosques, Norman castles and Flemish towers. Keen rivalry and business competition have, however, brought about a vast change. Oil and gas companies have begun to realize that an attractive building brings trade, and in consequence thereof the oil service stations have taken on better lines of architecture.

As a result, the gas station architects of the 1920s and 1930s began to draw design inspiration from architecture in the Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Beaux Arts, and Neo-Classical styles. Known as "artistic" stations,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> John Baeder, Gas, Food, and Lodging, (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1982), pp. 38-39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> John A, Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. 132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Daniel I. Vieyra, Fill'er Up, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979), p. 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Alexander G. Guth, "The Automobile Service Station," The Architectural Forum XLV, no. 1, (July 1926), 33.

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many were modeled after Greek temples and Roman monuments, and offered a sense of instant stability and respectability. It was the architecture of this period, particularly the "artistic" stations that changed the perception of gas stations to something favorable and attractive.

The *National Petroleum News*, established in 1909, served the oil industry and provided a format in which gas station architecture could be explored. Still in publication, the magazine identified nine building types used for gas stations between 1910 and 1990. The nine filling station types identified are the curbside, the shed, the house, the house with canopy, the house with bays, the oblong box, the small box, the small box with canopy, and the canopy with booth. As gas stations began to provide more services, in particular grease pits and carwashing floors, the house type was expanded to include service bays. One or two bays were often added to pre-existing gas stations, while newly constructed stations often included two or more bays to enclose the lubricating and washing services.

The prosperity of the 1920s and the growth of suburbs around Baltimore City brought a surge of new construction and tremendous influx of new residents to Catonsville. The population jumped from about 5,000 in 1920 to over 9,000 in 1930, with almost 900 new dwellings built in the village core and in surrounding subdivisions. The streetcar lines on Frederick Road and Edmondson Avenue remained important; however, after World War I, the automobile began to have a significant impact. Automobile dealerships appeared on Frederick Road and on several of the side streets. By the late 1920s, the old Short Line depot had become an auto repair shop. According to the 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, there was an automobile service station at 727 Frederick Road that provided service bays as well as off-street gasoline pumps. Additionally, the maps indicates the presence of two automobile dealerships, a filling station, an automobile repair shop and an automobile painting shop in Catonsville. 10

Although the 1930 Sanborn Maps do not show the Atlantic Refining Company at 585 Frederick Road, deed research indicates that the building was constructed by this time. The maps were drawn in March 1930, while the property transfer between Rosa and Christian Bauer and the Atlantic Refining Company did not take place until August 18, 1930. Historic map research indicates that the service station was constructed on the site of a single dwelling. The service station first appears on the 1958 revised Sanborn maps. Located at the intersection of Frederick Road and Bishop's Lane, it was the easternmost filling station of a continuous line of four, the others being located at 601, 607, and 609 Frederick Road. By this time, the additional service bays had been added to the rear of the building.

<sup>8</sup> Jakle and Sculle, pp. 134-135.

<sup>10</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Catonsville, Maryland: 1925.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Edward Orser and Joseph Arnold, Catonsville 1880 to 1940 from Village to Suburb, (Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company Publishers, 1989), pp. 123-124.

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Chain of Title:

October 19, 1920:

Henry C. Kalbin, Trustee, to Rosa Bauer

Land Records of Baltimore County,

Liber 531 Folio 344

August 18, 1930:

Rosa and Christian Bauer to The Atlantic Refining Company

Land Records of Baltimore County

Liber 860 Folio 242

July 15, 1948:

The Atlantic Refining Company to Dorothy and Joseph C. Busick

Land Records of Baltimore County

Liber 1679 Folio 303

November 22, 1957:

Dorothy G. and Joseph C. Busick to Johns Realty Company

Land Records of Baltimore County

Liber 3274 Folio 210

December 30, 1965:

The Johns Realty Company in liquidation to Rosalie Edelen Kelly, Mary E. McCabe, Frances E. Evans, Agnes E. Offutt, John W. Edelen, Jr., William B. Edelen, Emily West Boyd, :Louise West

Braff, and John H. West, Jr. tenants in common.

Land Records of Baltimore County

Liber 4622 Folio 287

May 7, 1998:

Rosalie Edelen. Kelly, Mary E. McCabe, J. Hamilton Allan et al to Jeanne M. and Robert J. Holden

Land Records of Baltimore County

Liber 12921 Folio 57

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#### HISTORIC CONTEXT:

#### MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Modern Period (1930-Present)

Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Development

Economic (Commercial and Industrial)

Resource Type:

Category:

Building

Historic Environment:

Town

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

Known Design Source:

Unknown

Baltimore County Land and Will Records. Baltimore County Courthouse, Towson, Maryland.

Baeder, John. Gas, Food, and Lodging. New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1982.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Tow Library, Inc., 1979.

Guth, Alexander G. "The Automobile Service Station." The Architectural Forum XLV, no. 1, (July 1926).

Jakle, John A. and Keith A. Sculle. *The Gas Station in America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Margolies, John. Pump and Circumstance. Boston, MA: Bulfinch Press, 1993.

Orser, Edward and Joseph Arnold. Catonsville 1880 to 1940 From Village to Suburb. Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company, 1989.

"Planning Techniques for New and Remodeled Buildings: Service Stations 1." *The Architectural Forum*, 66 (February, 1937).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Catonsville, Maryland: 1925 and 1930.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day: including Biographical Sketches of their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem Massachusetts.

Vieyra, Daniel I. Fill'er Up. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979.

Watson, James Douglas. *Prince George's County Past and Present*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Lithograph Co., 1962.

Witzel, Michael Karl. The American Gas Station. Osceola, WI: Motor Books International Publishers, 1992.

## 10. Geographical Data

Inventory No. BA-2915

Acreage of project area Acreage surveyed Quadrangle name Less than one acre
Less than one acre
Baltimore West, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

#### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property known as the Atlantic Refining Company Serivce Station is located at 585 Frederick Road in Catonsville, Maryland as noted on Tax Map 101, Parcel 1350. The service station has been associated with the site since its construction circa 1930.

# 11. Form Prepared by name/title Robin J. Weidlich, Laura Trieschmann, and Christopher V. Novelli, Architectural Historians organization EHT Traceries, Inc. street & number 5420 Western Avenue city or town Chevy Chase, Maryland

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

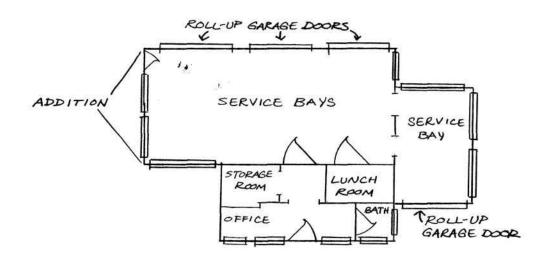
return to:

Maryland Historical Trust DHCD/DHCP 100 Community Pllace Crownsville, MD 21032 410-514-7600

# BA-2915

ATLANTIC REFINING COMPANY SERVICE STATION
585 FREDERICK ROAD
CATONSVILLE, MARYLAND
BALTIMORE COUNTY

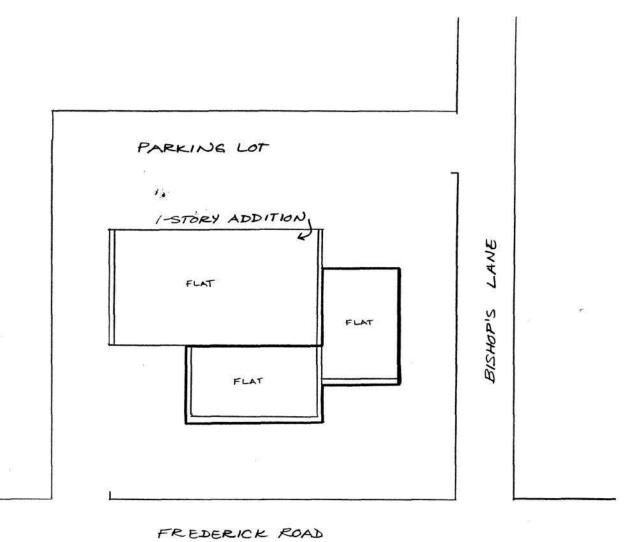
FIRST FLOOR NOT DRAWN TO SCALE NY

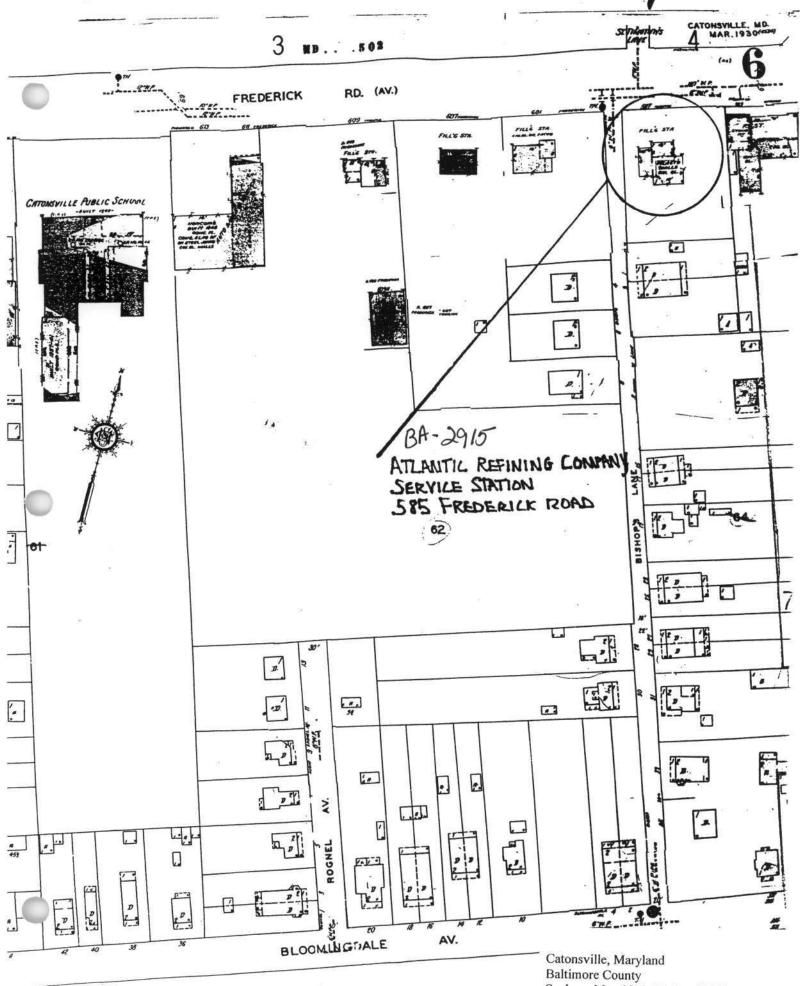


BA-2915

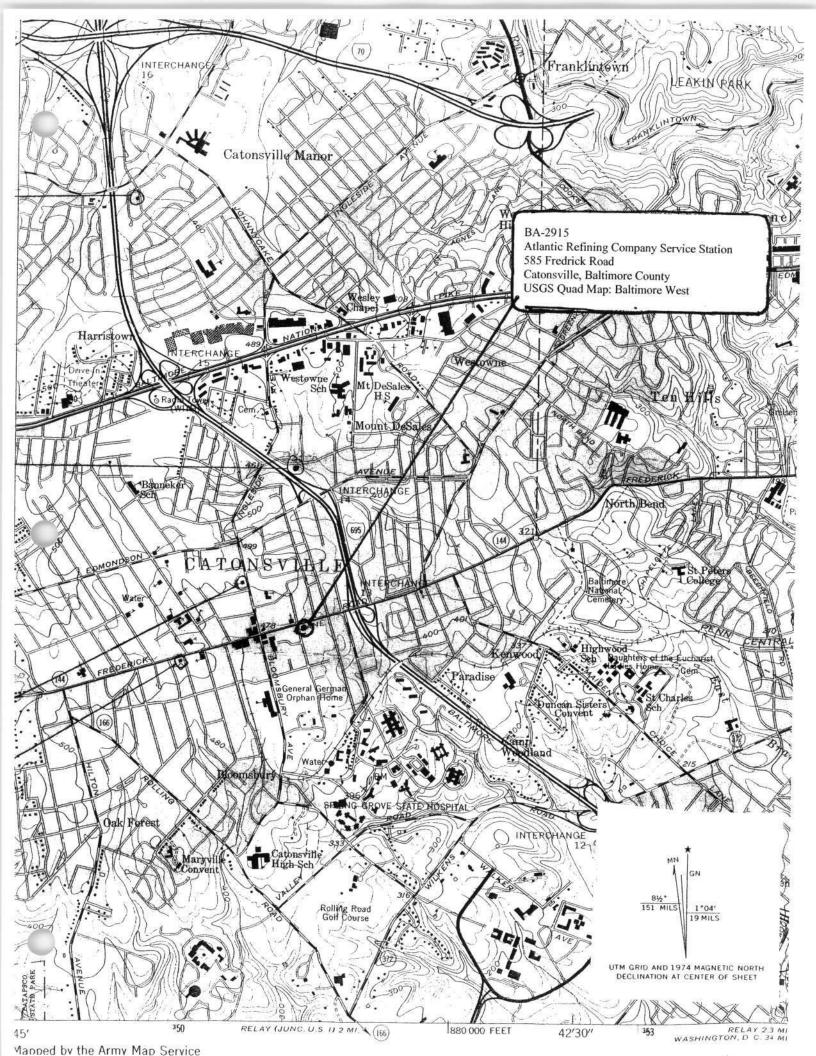
ATLANTIC REFINING COMPANY SERVICE STATION
585 FREDERICK ROAD
CATONSVILLE, MARYLAND
BALTIMORE COUNTY

NOT DEAWN TO SCALE NV





Sanborn Map 1930, Updated 1958





BA 2915
Atlantic Refining Company SERVICE STATION
585 Frederick Road, Catonsville
Baltimore County
Traceries
1/00

Maryland SHPO
north elevation LOOKING SOUTH



BA 2915 Atlantic Refining Company SERVICE STATION 585 Frederick Road, Catonsville Baltimore County Truceries 1/00 Maryland SHPO West elevation LOOKING EAST

2015



Atlantic Refining Company SERVICE STATION

585 Frederick Road, Catonsville

Baltimore County

Traceries

1/00

Maryland SHPO

south elevation LOOKING NORTH

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BA 2915 Atlantic Refining Company SERVICE STATION 585 Frederick Road, Catonsville Baltimore County Traceries 1/00 Maryland SHPO east elevation LOOKING SOUTHWEST



BA 2915
Atlantic Refining Company SERVICE STATION
585 Frederick Road, Catonsville
Baltimore County

Traceries

1/00

Margland SHPO addition looking northeast

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